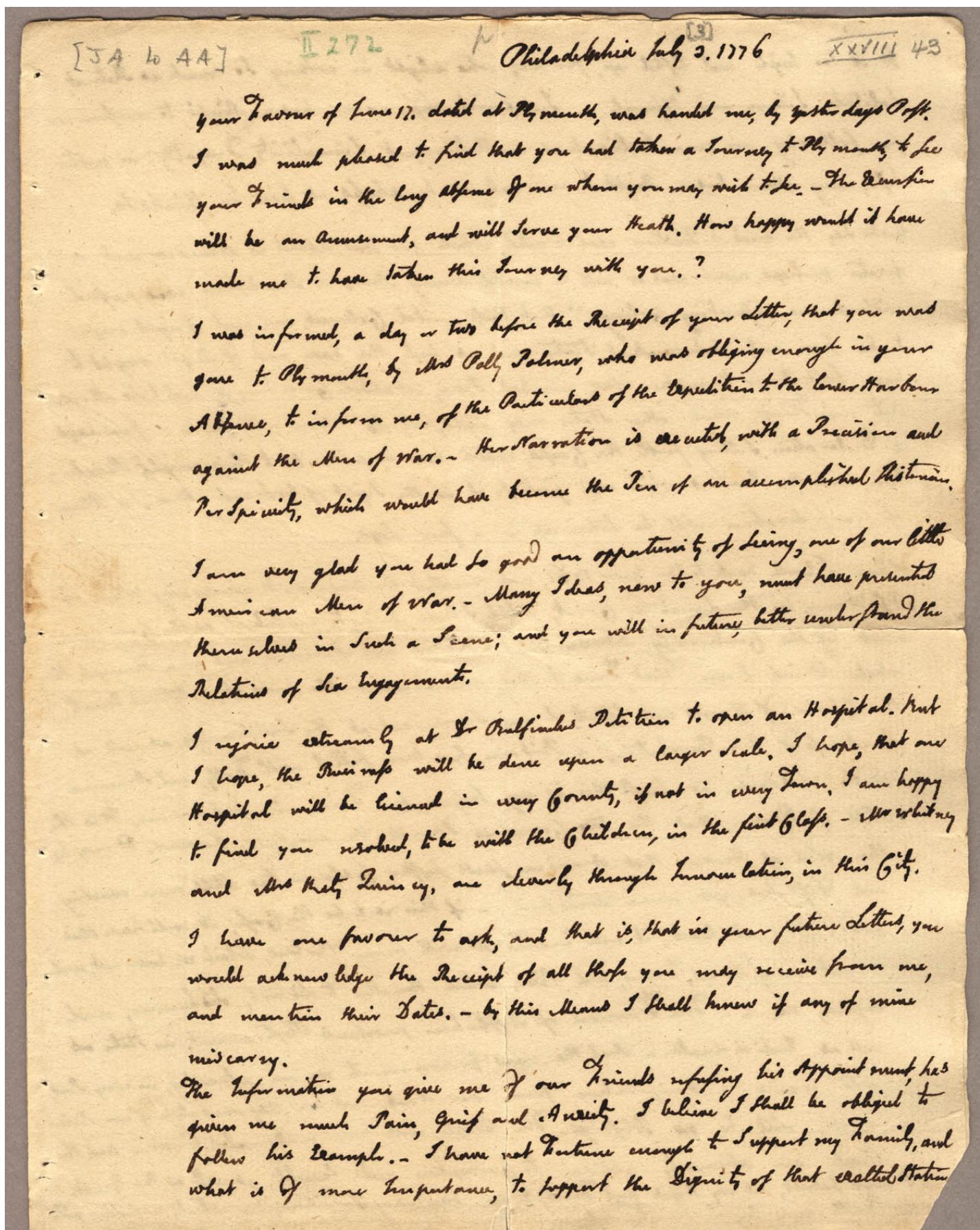


Appendix B: John Adams to Abigail Adams Letter 1, July 3, 1776 [1]

The following images were scanned from a letter written by John Adams to his wife, Abigail Adams, on July 3, 1776.



It is too high and lifted up, for me; who delight in nothing so much as Retirement, Solitude, Silence, and Obscurity. — In private life, no one has a right to enrage me for following my own inclination, in Retirement, Simplicity, Integrity: in public life, every man has a right to remark as he pleases, at least he thinks so.

yesterday the greatest Question was decided, which ever was debated in America, and a greater perhaps, never was or will be decided among men. a Resolution was passed without one dissenting Colony "that these United Colonies, are, and of right ought to be free and independent States, and as such, they have, and of Right ought to have full Power to make War, conclude Peace, establish Government, and to do all other Acts and Things, which other States may rightfully do." You will see in a few days a Declaration setting forth the Causes, which have impelled us to this mighty Resolution, and the Reasons which will justify it, in the sight of God and man. a Plan of Confederation will be taken up in a few days.

When I look back to the year 1761, and recollect the argument concerning Wtch of Affidavtance, in the Superior Court, which I have hitherto confided as the commencement of the Controversy, between Great Britain and America, and run through the whole Period from that Time to this, and recollect the series of political Events, the Chain of Causes and Effects, I am Surprised at the suddenness, as well as greatness of this Revolution. — Britain has been filled with Folly, and America with Wisdom, at least this is my Judgment. — Time must determine. It is the Will of Heaven, that the two Countries Should be Sundered forever. It may be the Will of Heaven that America shall suffer, Colonies still more wretched and Distressed yet more dreadfull. — if this is to be the Cause, it will have this good Effect, at least: it will inspire us with many Virtues, which we have not, and correct many Errors, Hobbies, and Vices, which threaten to distract, dismember, and destroy us. — The Furnace of Affliction produces Refinement, in States as well as Individuals. — And the new Government we are forming, in every part, will require a Purification from our Vices, and an augmentation of our Virtues or they will be no Blessings. The People will have uncontrolled Powers — And the People are extremely addicted to Corruption and Senility, as well as the Great. But I must submit, all my Hope and Head, to an overruling Providence, in which, unfeeling able Men Faile may be, I firmly believe.

From the Adams Family Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.
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[3]

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